A review of the past research revealed that work-family conflict is getting more and more importance. This issue got more recognition with the influx of women in the labor market. But, however, this issue of influx of women in the labor force has not gained so much maturity in Pakistan yet. Although the potential benefits of various work-related coping resources have been discussed, but few studies have analyzed the influence of supportive workplace on work-family role conflict in Pakistan. There is urgent need to conduct research on the work-family interface, in developing countries like Pakistan, because the public policy decisions must rest on solid foundation of accumulated knowledge. In the developed countries different models for coping with work-family conflict had been tested and this process is still going on. This study tested the relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict in order to use workplace as a coping resource for overcoming work-family conflict. This relationship was tested on the married admin staff members having basic pay scale from 6-16 of the University of the Punjab Quaid-e-Azam Campus, Lahore. Data were gathered via personally administered questionnaire from 225 participants. The data collected from the sample had proved after application of different well known statistical techniques, as it was hypothesized, that there is negative relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict. Several findings emerged, including the participants who perceived workplace supportive were having low level of work-family conflict. It is anticipated that this research will contribute to work-family theory development along with providing additional insight to the employers about the role of workplace in facilitating work-family coordination.

INTRODUCTION
In the start of 20th century husbands were the sole breadwinners of family while wives stayed home, in Asian countries. But the trend has changed with the passage of time due to the change in the perception of women about work and family life. In west in 1950s, single women dominated the female labor market and the lifetime employment pattern of women roughly followed an "M" shape (Shank, 1988). Women worked before marriage and began to drop out of the labor market with either marriage or, particularly parenthood. Those who returned to the labor market did so when their children reached school-age and left again in the later years of life (Hayghe, 1990). During this period, the issue of work-family conflict was not a significant issue, since career paths in organizations were developed with the expectation that jobs would "be filled by a man who has a wife to manage the household, allowing his full attention to be given to the job" (Nieva, 1985). The perception of women about handling the work and family life in a parallel manner has changed in similar pattern in Pakistan from 1990s. In the 1990s increase in the number of dual-earner families has come about
because of the influx of women, particularly mothers, into the labor market. According to Pakistan Federal Bureau of Statistics (2005-06) almost 45% of labor force comprises of women of different age groups. This revolutionary change has made work-family conflict an important concept in the analysis of the interface between work and family.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have defined work-family conflict as; "a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role".

Much of the literature on the interdependence of work and family life speaks in general terms about its pervasiveness and significance. In addition, several recent studies have examined relationships between work and family role characteristics and work-family conflict. Although researchers also use various other terms such as work-family role strain (Keith & Schafer, 1980), family role strain (Katz & Piotrkowski, 1983), family/work role incompatibility (Jones & Butler, 1980), work-induced family strain (Mortimer, 1980), and impact of job on home and family (Burke, Weir & DuWors, 1980), their usage is consistent with the definition of work-family conflict used in this study.

Early researchers might have assumed that the worlds of work and home were separate (Brotheridge & Lee, 2005), countless empirical studies and several review articles examining the work-home interface have documented that the two domains influence, and are influenced by each other (Sikora, Moore, Grunberg & Greenberg, 2007).

The relationship between employees' work lives and their non-work pursuits has undergone scrutiny (Kanter, 1977; Voydanoff, 1980). One element of the work non-work interface is the conflict a person may experience between the work role and other life roles.

The impact of work-family conflict on coping strategies (Gilbert & Holahan, 1982; Hall, 1972) and psychological well being (Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980) is unquestionably important because employees have too much to do and too little time in which to do it.

Menaghan and Parcel (1990) suggest that the form work-family conflict may take is also likely to vary by social class and the number of employed adults in the family. For example, the most important stress on a single-parent, female-headed household may be economic while the major stress for a professional, dual-career couple may be work absorption on the part of one or both parents which precludes desired familial involvement.

Work-family conflict has been found to be negatively related to several variables that are linked to career satisfaction, such as career progression (Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1996) and career involvement (Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh, & Reilly, 1995), and to other types of satisfaction, such as job and life satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). Therefore, employers are using different techniques, initiated through research by scholars, to cope with work-family conflict.

What individuals and families can do to cope with employment and family life, increasing attention is being directed to the role that the workplace can play in generating solutions to work-family
difficulties. Emerging literature on workplace support proposes that workplaces can play an important role in assisting employees with the coordination of employment and family roles (Bowen, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; McCroskey, 1982; Voydanoff, 1987). Discussions of supportive or "family-friendly" workplaces typically focus on three types of coping resources that may be valuable to employees: (a) family-friendly organizational culture, (b) supportive supervisory practices, and (c) available family-oriented benefits. Employees who believe their organization to be aware and understanding their family responsibilities may be more likely to perceive their workplace as a coping resource rather than simply a source of work-related demands. Knowing that they can look to their workplace for support may make employed care-givers (Warren A. & Johnson J., 1995) feel better able to adequately fulfill their work and family demands.

In recent years, private employers have become increasingly interested in developing personnel policies and support programs which enable people to hold jobs and still maintain a viable family life.

**Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

- To measure the perceptions of employees about workplace supportiveness;
- To measure the level of work-family conflict in the employees; and
- To empirically test the relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict.

**Significance**

More females are entering in professional fields like management, banking, engineering etc. This is due to change in the perception of women about the traditional notion that men are sole breadwinners of family, however, this issue of influx of women in the labor force has not gained so much maturity in Pakistan yet. Although the potential benefits of various work-related coping resources have been discussed, but few studies have analyzed the influence of supportive workplace on work-family role conflict in Pakistan.

This research will add up something to the body of knowledge regarding the effect of workplace facilitation on the work-family conflict of employees. There is urgent need, especially in Pakistan, of research on the workplace and work-family interface because the public policy decisions must rest on solid foundation of accumulated knowledge. It is anticipated that this research will contribute to work-family theory development and will provide employers with additional insight into the role of the workplace in facilitating work-family coordination.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

The study of work and the study of the family have traditionally constituted separate sub-disciplines in sociology. Rapoport and Rapoport (1965) and Kanter (1976), among others, have aptly stressed the need for greater examination of work and family roles in relation to each other. This form of joint consideration is necessary to describe how individuals functioning in either of these spheres are affected by their involvement in the other. This study has strongly affected the traditional allocation of work and family roles.
between men and women. Traditional sex role norms prescribed the specialization of work and family responsibilities by sex, but a new option for each sex to integrate roles in both work and the family is emerging. Conflict is a state of discord caused by the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. A conflict can be internal (within oneself) or external (between two or more individuals).

Kahn, Wolfe, Quinlin, Snoek, and Rosenthal have defined role conflict as the "simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other" (1964). They identified different types of conflict within the work role: intra-sender; inter-sender; and person-role conflict. In each form of conflict, one set of role pressures is in some sense incompatible with the other set of pressures.

Role conflict in which the sets of opposing pressures arise from participation in different roles is called inter role conflict. In a more general sense, inter role conflict is experienced when pressures arising in one role are incompatible with pressures arising in another role. Note that role pressure incompatibility exists when participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in another role.

Since work and family are two different roles therefore work-family conflict is a form of inter role conflict. Based on the work of Kahn et al. (1964), the work-family conflict can be defined as: a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family role and vice versa.

There are three major forms of work-family conflict: (a) time-based conflict, (b) strain-based conflict, and (c) behavior-based conflict. Any role characteristic that affects a person's time involvement, strain, or behavior within a role can produce conflict between that role and another role. Role pressures (and hence work-family conflict) are intensified when the work and family roles are salient or central to the person's self-concept and when there are strong negative sanctions for noncompliance with role demands (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Work schedule control was used by Herman and Gyllstrom (1977) to explain why more severe work-family tension was experienced by university professional staff members than by faculty members. The faculty members worked more hours than the staff members but presumably had more control over their schedules.

However, it cannot be assumed that flexible working hours will inevitably reduce the work-family conflict of all employees. In their thorough investigation of a flexi time program in a government agency, Bohen and Viveros-Long (1981) concluded that the "modest" schedule flexibility in the agency they examined may have been insufficient to reduce the conflict of those with primary childcare responsibility, such as employed mothers. Thus, the degree of flexibility permitted and the needs of the employees may jointly affect the prevalence of work-family conflict. An employee's personal orientation may affect work-family conflict by virtue of its influence on time commitment to the work role.
Family role characteristics that require a person to spend large amounts of time in family activities can produce work-family conflict. Consistent with this proposition, Herman and Gyllstrom (1977) found that married persons experienced more work-family conflict than unmarried persons. In a similar vein, it might be expected that parents would experience more work-family conflict than non-parents. Although support for this expectation has been mixed (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a; Pleck, Staines, & Lang, 1980), having the major responsibility for child rearing may be the significant contributor to work-family conflict (Bohen & Viveros-Long, 1981).

Several studies have found that parents of younger children (who are likely to be particularly demanding of their parents' time) experience more conflict than do parents of older children (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1980; Greenhaus & Kopelman, 1981; Pleck et al., 1980). Large families, which are likely to be more time demanding than small families, also have been associated with high levels of work-family conflict (Cartwright, 1978; Keith & Schafer, 1980).

Beutell and Greenhaus (1982) reported that large families produce conflict primarily for women whose husbands are highly involved in their own work careers. It is plausible that a highly career-involved man devotes little time to his family, thereby increasing the already heavy time demands placed on his wife by a large family. Consistent with this notion, Keith and Schafer (1980) reported that a woman's level of work-family conflict is directly related to the number of hours her husband works per week.

Family role pressures that impinge on women also may be a function of the number of hours that they work outside the home. Hall and Gordon (1973) found that married women who are employed part time were more likely to experience home-related conflicts than women who are employed full time. They observed that women with part-time jobs may be spread very thin and experience role overload; not only do they work outside the home, but they may be full-time housewives as well. It may be that part-time employment (for women at least) does not necessarily lighten family time demands and might even increase the total array of pressures to which the person is exposed.

Husbands of managerial/professional women have been found to experience more intense work-family conflict than husbands of non-managerial/non-professional women (Greenhaus & Kopelman, 1981). It is possible that women who are employed in managerial or professional positions work sufficiently longer hours to produce intense pressures on the husband to participate more heavily in family activities which, in turn, may conflict with his work responsibilities.

Conflict within the family has been associated with high levels of work-family conflict (Kopelman, Greenhaus & Connolly, 1983), whereas supportive spouses may protect each other from experiencing high levels of work-family conflict (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979a). Beutell and Greenhaus (1983) found that a husband with pro-feminist attitudes (and presumably supportive behaviors) may buffer his wife from the conflict associated with extensive involvement outside the home.

Jones and Butler (1980) found that low levels of leader support and interaction
facilitation appear to produce work-family conflict. They also found that work-family conflict was negatively related to task challenge, variety, and importance and was positively related to task autonomy.

Bartolome and Evans (1980) suggest that certain stressful events at work (specifically, coping with a new job, poor job-person fit, and disappointment due to unfulfilled expectations) produce fatigue, tension, worry, or frustration that make it difficult to pursue a satisfying non-work life.

Husband-wife disagreement about family roles (Chadwick, Albrecht, & Kunz, 1976) and husband-wife dissimilarity in attitudes toward a wife’s employment status (Eiswirth-Neems & Handal, 1978) also can contribute to family tension.

Work-family conflict has been found to be negatively related to several variables that are linked to career satisfaction, such as career progression (Stroh, Brett, & Reilly, 1996) and career involvement (Tenbrunsel, Brett, Maoz, Stroh & Reilly, 1995), and to other types of satisfaction, such as job and life satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

A number of variables have been found to moderate the difficulties associated with balancing work and family. For couples, the extent of the husband’s participation in household tasks and the correspondence between the wife’s employment status and the preferences of both the husband and the wife are important (Hoffman, 1989). Despite its demonstrated importance and recent modest increases, however, studies indicate relatively little male participation in child care and housework (Ferree, 1990; Thompson & Walker, 1989).

Historically different ways were tried to overcome the work-family conflict. But, however, emerging literature on workplace support proposes that workplaces can play an important role in assisting employees with the coordination of employment and family roles (Bowen, 1988; Kamerman & Kahn, 1987; McCroskey, 1982; Voydanoff, 1987).

The research is varied with regard to the influence of a supportive work environment. This may be largely due to the different ways in which studies have attempted to measure this construct, including those that focus on supervisors’ support, organizational support, or both (Greenberger, Goldberg, Hamill, O’Neil & Payne, 1989; Goff, Mount & Jamison, 1990); those that look at the supportiveness of coworkers (Greenberger et al., 1989; Reifman, Biernat & Lang, 1991); and several that have attempted to assess this construct in an overall or global manner (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Parasuraman, Greenhaus & Granrose, 1992).

Supervisor’s support, particularly with regard to potential conflicts between work and family responsibilities, has a positive influence. Goff, Mount and Jamison (1990) found that supervisors’ supportiveness around family-related problems was directly related to lowered role conflict for their women participants; and both Greenberger et al. and, Warren and Johnson (1995) reported that supervisors’ flexibility with regard to family responsibilities made a significant contribution to reducing women’s strain. Two studies using more global but different measures of perceived work or organizational support obtained mixed results. Parasuraman et al. (1992) found no effect of general
work support on women’s life stress, whereas Greenhaus, Bedeian, and Mossholder (1987) reported a significant relationship between perceptions of a non-supportive work environment and increased work-family conflict.

The work environment is dichotomized into structural and dynamic components. In the research literature, the dynamic features of the workplace are often considered motivators or intrinsic rewards (Kagan, 1983). They include social-environmental characteristics of the job and work setting, such as the challenge or interest of the job itself, the employee's degree of autonomy or level of responsibility, and the opportunity provided for personal growth or career advancement in the corporation.

The structural features of the work environment are more extrinsic to the job. They include such features as the level of pay and fringe benefits, company policies and practices toward employee working conditions, the nature of interpersonal relations in the corporation, and the types and range of corporate supports for the family lives of employees. Dynamic and structural features of the work environment which are non-optimal and which place stress on employees in the workplace are predicted to create "spillover" interference with their relationships at home. At the same time, what is "optimal" for a given employee must be defined with respect to his/her personal and family circumstances.

According to Galinsky and Stein (1990), the major problems employed family members experience fall into seven categories. They include: child care, elder care, work time and timing, relocation, job autonomy and job demands, supervisory relationship, and supportive organizational culture.

Strategies used by employed women to cope include reducing time spent doing housework, increasing efficiency, redistributing household chores, giving up leisure time, and planning special parent-child activities (Piotrokowski, Rapoport & Rapoport, 1987). Some couples work non-day shifts and/or stagger their hours in an attempt to manage role overload and conflict (Presser, 1987). Other strategies sometimes used for moderating stress include alteration of wives' activities. For example, some mothers employed full-time prefer to work fewer hours (Moen & Dempster-McClain, 1987) while others sequence work and family roles (e.g., early career/late family, early marriage/late work).

Leading employers are implementing family-oriented policies and services for employees. These include flexible alternatives in the scheduling and hours of work, extended maternity leave provisions and benefits, paid personal days for child and family responsibilities, information and referral services, relocation assistance, diverse educational programs, and even corporate child-care programs. These work-related benefits, policies, and services provide the opportunity for many families to remain economically self-sufficient, better able to integrate work and family demands and responsibilities. However, many companies and many managers are still neither aware nor responsive to work-family issues (Galinsky & Stein, 1990). Pakistani employers lag behind those in other countries in respect to supplying benefits that would assist their employees in balancing work and family. The fact that changes toward a family-responsive workplace have been so slow has lead to questioning of
whether market solutions will deliver good or equitable family policy in the foreseeable future (Kingston, 1990) and calls for government action.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS**

It is the presence of two strong opposing role pressures (in this case, from the work and the family domains) that produces inter-role conflict.

Let us take an example of an employee who works for long hours in a stressful environment. In an objective sense, the person's work activities may interfere with his or her participation in family activities. However, if there is no strong pressure to participate in family activities, the person is not likely to experience conflict between work and family roles. As pressures to engage in family activities grow stronger, the opposing pressures i.e. pressure from work domain and family domain may become equally strong and conflict may be experienced.

**Proposition:**

“Simultaneous pressures from both work and family roles are necessary to arouse work-family conflict.” (A)

When there exist role pressures for two opposing roles it can be inferred that multiple roles will compete for a person’s time. Time spent on one activity within one role generally can not be devoted to activities within another role. Therefore time pressure associated with the membership in one role make it physically impossible to comply with the expectations arising from other role. Similar is the case that time spent on workplace can not be devoted to the family responsibilities and vice versa. So time spent at workplace results in failure to comply with the expectations of family role.

**Proposition:**

“In the presence of role pressure from more than one role more time devoted to one role create inter role conflict.”

“More time devoted to either work role or to family role will create work-family conflict.” (B)

It is likely that the perception about the significance of a role has a direct impact on pressures within the particular domain. Hall's (1976) model of psychological success suggests that as a person's career sub identity grows, he or she becomes more ego-involved in the role and may exhibit higher levels of motivation. It seems reasonable to expect that an expanded family sub identity would produce similar consequences within the family domain. The resultant ego-involved and motivation, in turn, may increase time commitment and/or produce strain that may interfere with another role. As a result person falls a prey to work-family conflict

**Proposition:**

“More time is devoted to the role which is perceived as more significant” (C1)  
“The more significant a role is the more involvement in that role will be” (C2)  
“The more involvement in role takes more of the time for that role and hence creates conflict” (C3)

“The more time devoted to one role either to work or to family will create work-family conflict” (C)

The emergence of the two-career couple has highlighted the importance of supportive relationships within the family (Hall & Hall, 1979). Individuals whose spouses work long hours are likely to be responsible for a greater share of household and child care duties, and those with children needing supervision may find it difficult to coordinate their work schedules with
those of their spouses. Recent research indicates that emotional support is important for women and men (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979) to balance the work-family responsibilities. Supportive spouses may protect each other from experiencing high levels of work-family conflict by producing fewer time demands, and more flexible expectations regarding behavior in a role. On the other hand, husband-wife dissimilarity in attitudes towards wife’s employment status can contribute to family tension. Albeit it may take different forms, it is likely that spouse support is important for one-career households as well as two-career households.

**Proposition:**

“The greater the spouse support the lower will be the strain in the roles and the lower will be the work family conflict”. ($D$)

Specific patterns of behavior are required from human beings in different roles. These specific patterns of behavior in one role may be incompatible with the expectations regarding behavior in another role. For example at the workplace employees are expected to exhibit secretiveness and mental stability. It is found that male managerial employees emphasize self reliance, emotional stability, aggressiveness and objectivity (Schein, 1973). Family members, on the other hand may expect a person to be warm, emotional and vulnerable in his/her interaction with them. These two behavioral expectations are incompatible with each other. If a person is unable to adjust behavior to comply with the expectations of different roles, he or she is likely to experience conflict between the roles.

**Proposition:**

“Behavior in different competing roles is related to work-family conflict”. ($E$)

Irrespective to the fact of more influx of women in the labor market men are considered as responsible for arrangement of finances for the family expenditure and to perform this task they have to spend much of their time at the workplace also it has now emerged as requirement of employers that employees should ensure more time commitment. There are clear, and objective calls on you, and the penalties if you don't meet them are explicit and obvious at workplace. The demands and request that family gives to men are not so clear and obvious. So they are considered less responsible for family responsibilities like child care and elder care. Therefore they have been less exposed to family sanctions but more to the work sanctions.

Women are considered to have more family responsibilities; therefore they have been more exposed to stronger sanctions for noncompliance with the family role. As a result, under the condition of competing demands women are expected to show less commitment to job as compared to men. Rosen and Jerdee (1974) found that when faced with competing demands at work and at home, less commitment to the job is expected for women than for men. Therefore, the absence of strong sanctions for noncompliance may reduce pressures to comply with role demands (Gross et al., 1958).

**Proposition:**

“The stronger the sanctions for non compliance with the role the greater will be the work-family conflict.” ($F$)

Coworkers play a central role in how people negotiate their work and family lives. If the people living in a culture are supportive to each other the culture is considered as supportive culture. The
work activities are performed smoothly in a culture enriched with supportive behavior. A supportive culture positively influences an employee’s intentions to remain with the organization. This positive influence will also help employee in building up the perception about the workplace. If the employees perceive workplace as supportive they consider it easy to manage their work and non work issues. However, individuals seeking to balance work and family life may have their efforts thwarted by unsupportive coworkers. For example, if a worker wants to leave work early to pick up his/her child from school may be unsuccessful if coworkers refuse to cooperate with him. In this condition the worker will feel more stress at workplace. On the other hand, supportive coworkers can serve to make balancing work and family easier by helping to pick up the slack if an employee needs to leave early for a family reason.

**Proposition:**

“The more supportive the coworkers the more positive will be their perception about the organizational culture. The better balance of work-family role leads to low level of work-family conflict” (G)

The role of supervisor is very crucial in the perception of employee about workplace. It has been identified that it is "immediate supervisor who is primarily responsible for defining what the working experience of his/her employees will be like" (Vanier Institute of the Family, 1993). If the employees perceive their immediate supervisor as willing to discuss family-related problems and flexible when family emergencies arise, they consider their problem half solved. On the other hand if the supervisor is not supportive to employees while their non work responsibilities arise, the employees will feel stress. Thus, the employees who have an immediate supervisor who is supportive of their need to combine work and family responsibilities may experience lower levels of work-family difficulties than their counterparts.

**Proposition**

“The more supportive the supervisor the lower the strain at work, the lower the strain at work more easy it will be to balance work-family responsibilities, the more easy to balance the work-family responsibilities the lower will be the work-family conflict” (H)

Employees with children living at home need time and flexibility to deal with child care, sick children, and domestic work that grow alongside as the number of children increases. The employed parents of young children and parents of large families are more likely to desire and need family-supportive benefits to help them balance their work-family responsibilities. Making family-friendly policies or offering family oriented benefits have a positive impact on employee attachment, regardless of whether an employee individually benefited from the policies. Grover and Crooker (1995) systematically assessed the effect of multiple family-supportive benefits on employees’ organizational attachment and found that employees who worked for companies with family oriented benefits had higher levels of affective
commitment and lower intentions to leave than employees at companies without these benefits. Family oriented benefits influence employees’ connection to the organization symbolically because they signify corporate concern for their well-being.

**Proposition**

“The more family oriented benefits and family responsive policies are offered, the more the employees will perceive workplace as supportive to their work-family issues, the more they perceive workplace as supportive more easy it will be to balance their work-family responsibilities, the better balanced the work-family responsibilities the lower will be the work-family conflict” (I)

**Hypothesis**

Based on the above propositions the hypothesis is;

“The more supportive, for family responsibilities, the workplace the lower will be the level of work-family conflict”
Method

Sample and Procedure
The study aims to delineate the negative relationship between “Supportive Workplace and Work-Family Conflict”. Survey research was used so that data could be collected at a less cost within a short period of time. Moreover honest responses could be encouraged because of the anonymity of the respondents.

Population of the present study comprised of all the non-teaching married staff members working in scale 6-16 of all the 64 Departments/Centers/Institutes of the University of the Punjab Quaid-e-Azam Campus, Lahore. All the permanent and contract based employees fulfilling above conditions were included.

Multistage sampling was used to select the sample. At the first stage 15 departments/institutes/centers were selected randomly from the 64 departments/institutes/centers to avoid the researcher’s bias. In the second stage 17 employees from each of the 15 departments/institutes/centers were randomly selected. The criteria for selection of employees in sample were being married and admin staff members of any of the 15 sampled departments/institutes/centers and working in scale 6-16. In this way 255 participants were selected from the 15 departments/institutes/centers.

Personally administered questionnaire was used for collecting data on the variables of supportive workplace and work-family conflict. This tool was employed because it enabled to collect data in less time and involved fewer expenses. Any doubts that the respondents might have could be clarified at the spot. Moreover, the completed questionnaire could be collected immediately thus increasing the response rate.

The questionnaire was consisting of 48 closed ended questions on five point Likert scale. A letter containing information regarding the objective of the study was attached with questionnaire. It encouraged the cooperation from the participants by ensuring that information provided in survey will be kept confidential.

Data editing
After collection of data through questionnaire, it was adjusted for omissions, legibility and consistency. The purpose was to ensure completeness and consistency of data. Blank, omitted or unanswered responses were dealt by plugging in the mid point in the likert scale as a response to that particular item. A questionnaire that had 25% unanswered questions was discarded. By using this criterion 30 questionnaires were discarded and remaining 225 questionnaires were used for analysis with the response rate of 88%.

Measures

Supportive Workplace
Theoretically supportive workplace means the workplace that fosters work-life quality and balance.
In this study “supportive workplace means such a workplace that employees perceive helpful in fulfilling their work and family responsibilities easily.” Here employees’ perceptions about the workplace would be expected to influence their attitudes about the organization. The questionnaire had a total of 27 questions for variable supportive workplace on a five point likert scale ranging from strongly agree
For the negative statements the scoring was reversed. So the minimum and maximum range of response for this variable could lie from 27 to 135. The data was analyzed along three categories of high, medium and low for the variable supportive workplace. The score range for high category was 100-135, for medium category was 64-99, and for low category was 27-63.

**Work-family conflict**
A form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family role and vice versa. The questionnaire had a total of 19 questions for the variable work-family conflict on five point likert scale ranging from strongly agree = 5 to strongly disagree = 1. For the negative statements the scoring was reversed. So the minimum and maximum range of responses for this variable could lie from 19-85. The data was analyzed along three categories of high, medium, and low for the variable work-family conflict. The score range for high category was 63-85, for medium category it was 41-62, and for low category it was 19-40.

**Results**
The sample finally selected for data analysis consisted of 225 participants. The sample was composed of 62% males and 38% female married admin staff members working in scale 6-16.
The data were entered in computer for the purpose of analysis. The results obtained were presented in two uni-variate tables and one bi-variate table.

**Tables 1: Supportive workplace**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from table 1 that 51% of the married admin staff members from scale 6-16 perceived University of the Punjab a highly supportive workplace. In contrast 17% of the participants perceived supportive workplace level of University of the Punjab was low. The results from the data can be generalized as that generally the married admin staff members having scale from 6-16 perceived University of the Punjab a supportive workplace.
Tables 2: Work-family conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>225</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data represented in table 2 can be interpreted as that 46% of the participants had low level of work-family conflict and 20% had high level work-family conflict. Therefore it can be concluded that generally the married admin staff members from scale 6-16, of University of the Punjab, had low level of work-family conflict.

Keeping in view the research hypothesis, a bi-variate table had been constructed, to determine the direction of relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict.

Tables 3: Supportive workplace by Work-family conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive workplace</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from table 3 that 65% of the participants who perceived their workplace highly supportive had low level of work-family conflict. In contrast only 26% participants perceived their workplace as low supportive had low work-family conflict. Similarly there were 11% participants who had perception that their workplace is highly supportive and had high level of work-family conflict. In contrast there were 56% participants who perceived their workplace as low supportive and had high level of work-family conflict. Therefore it can be concluded that there is negative relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict.
To examine that whether the relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict is spurious, I have examined the relationship by using control variable “Gender”. There were 114 (62%) males and 85 (38%) females in the sample.

**Tables 4: Supportive workplace (Males)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from table 4 that 59% of the male participants perceived University of the Punjab a highly supportive workplace and 12% of the male participants had perceived low level of workplace support in University of the Punjab. The results from the data can be generalized as that generally the married male admin staff members having scale from 6-16 had perceived University of the Punjab a supportive workplace.

**Tables 5: Work-family conflict (Males)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data represented in table 5 can be interpreted as that 54% of the male participants had low level of work-family conflict and 18% had high level work-family conflict. Therefore it can be concluded that generally the married male admin staff members from scale 6-16 had low level of work-family conflict.
Tables 6: Supportive workplace by Work-family conflict (Males)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive workplace</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from table 6 that 64% of male participants who perceived their workplace highly supportive had low level of work-family conflict. In contrast 25% male participants perceived their workplace as low supportive and had low work-family conflict. Similarly there were 12% male participants who had perception that their workplace is highly supportive and had high level of work-family conflict. In contrast there were 44% male participants who perceived their workplace as low supportive and had high level of work-family conflict. Therefore it can be concluded that there is negative relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict for male admin staff members of the University of the Punjab.

Tables 7: Supportive workplace (Females)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the data of table 7 it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between the female participants who had perceived University of the Punjab as highly supportive workplace or low supportive workplace. But, however, majority of the female participants fall in medium level and high level category of the supportiveness of workplace. Therefore it can be inferred that generally female admin staff members perceived their workplace as providing more than low level of workplace support.
Tables 8: Work-family conflict (Females)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>85</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 8 it could be interpreted that 46% of the female participants had medium level of work-family conflict. There was no significant difference between female who had low level of work-family conflict and females who had high level of work-family conflict. Therefore it can be concluded that generally the female admin staff members having scale from 6-16 had medium level of work-family conflict.

Tables 9: Supportive workplace by Work-family conflict (Females)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supportive workplace</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be inferred from table 9 that 68% of female participants who had perception that their workplace is highly supportive had low level of work-family conflict. In contrast 25% of the female participants perceived their workplace as low supportive and had low work-family conflict. Similarly there were 12% female participants who had perception that their workplace is highly supportive and had high level of work-family conflict and there were 44% female participants who perceived their workplace as low supportive and had high level of work-family conflict.

It can be concluded that there is negative relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict for female admin staff members of the University of the Punjab. It
can be inferred that there is genuine negative relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict is not spurious. The more supportive the workplace is the lower will be the level of work-family conflict.

**Conclusions, and Recommendations**

**Conclusion**

It can be concluded from this study that family-friendly atmosphere at work is an integral part of how organization can help employees to balance their work-family obligations. Boss had a very significant relationship with the employees’ perception about supportiveness of workplace. Employee with supportive boss can balance their work family responsibilities in a well manner and had a low level of work-family conflict. Work-family conflict is a problem not only for females but for males as well. Both male and females faces with work-family conflict and use supportive workplace as a coping resource. It can be concluded at the end that when employees perceive their workplace supportive they can balance their work-family obligations easily and exhibit low level of work-family conflict.

**Recommendations**

On the basis of the results of this research I give following recommend that:

- Workshops should be conducted on the issue of the work-family conflict to educate the managers.
- Consideration must be given to the work related coping resources to overcome work-family conflict of the employees.
- Family life educators should be given participation in the committee making decisions regarding activities at workplace.
- Boss should act in family-friendly manner.
- Authorities should keep employees family responsibility in mind while making policy decisions.
- University should promote the family-friendly environment.
- University should arrange functions where employees can interact with the top management.
- Future research is needed in different types of organizations to study the relationship between supportive workplace and work-family conflict.

**Limitations**

The results of this research could be used to cope with work-family conflict but, however, there were certain limitations which may affect the results.

- The results of this study may not be generalized because this research was conducted on a sample located in a single site of the University of the Punjab.
- It was a cross sectional study, conducted at one point in time.
- Some of the contextual factors like the sector of the university, the influence of regulating authorities had not been taken into consideration while conducting this study. These factors may influence the strength of relationship tested in this study.
References


Steinmetz (Eds.), Handbook of marriage and the family. New York: Plenum.